

BREAD LOAF SCHOOL OF ENGLISH

PRELIMINARY ANNOUNCEMENTS

1949

All matters relative to your room and board, mail, and any charges you may incur (apart from the regular bill for tuition, board and room) should be referred to the INN DESK.

For details regarding the management of the School, please make inquiry at the DIRECTOR'S OFFICE. All matters pertaining to your initial registration and payment of bills, information about courses, lectures, and graduate credit should be referred to the SECRETARY'S OFFICE. Director R.L. Cook and Miss Lillian Becker, Secretary, are the staff to whom you should bring your requests for information about details of the School.

REGISTRATION PROCEDURE

Students should obtain confirmation of their courses from the Secretary's Office as soon after arrival at Bread Loaf as possible. Students who have not completed registration of courses in advance must personally consult with the Director. Appointments may be made with Miss Becker. Students should make a copy for themselves of their class schedules.

A recorder will be in the Blue Parlor on June 29. Registration is not completed until a registration card and a "notify in case of accident" card have been returned to the recorder. Please be sure to fill in the registration card on both sides.

A representative of the College Treasurer's Office will be in the Blue Parlor on Wednesday, June 29. It is requested that all bills which have not been paid be attended to at this time. Receipts for bills paid in advance may be obtained from the Treasurer at this time.

Please keep in mind the fact that if you wish to change your status from that of a non-credit student to that of a credit student or vice versa in any course, this change must be made on or before July 1. All changes in courses must be made with the approval of the Director. For a change from one course to another, after July 1, a charge of one dollar will be made. All persons desiring to visit classes in which they are not enrolled must also obtain permission from the Director.

MAIL SCHEDULE

Outgoing mail must be posted not later than 8:30 A.M. and 1:30 P.M. Mail will be ready for distribution at the following hours: 10:00 A.M. and 3:30 P.M.

MEAL HOURS

In a day or two the regular seating plan will go into effect. There will be one seating. Please consult the chart on the dining room door to ascertain your table assignments.

DAILY

Breakfast	7:30-8:00 A.M.
Luncheon	12:45-1:00 P.M.
Dinner	6:00-6:15 P.M.

SUNDAY

Breakfast	8:00-8:30 A.M.
Dinner	1:00-1:30 P.M.
Supper	6:00-6:30 P.M.

Since most of the waiters and waitresses are students, it is urgently requested that all students come to meals promptly, especially to breakfast, so that those who are waiting on table may be able to reach their classes on time. In the morning the door will be closed at 8:00. No students may be served breakfast after that time. Please do not ask the head waitress to make exceptions to this regulation. She has no authority to do so.

SUPPLIES

Stationery, notebook paper, pencils, ink, post cards, cigarettes, etc., may be purchased at the Bookstore. It is impossible for credit to be extended, so please do not ask for it.

BOOKSTORE

It is urgently requested that students purchase their texts immediately because it is frequently necessary for us to order additional copies. It is impossible to allow students to maintain charge accounts at the Bookstore, and we hope that students will cooperate by not asking for any favors of this kind. The hours when the Bookstore will be open will be announced soon.

BREAD LOAF PARKING REGULATIONS

A preliminary notice concerning parking has been made in the catalogue. New and stringently enforced state laws prohibit the parking of cars on the side of the highway, and it is requested that students and guests endeavor to keep the roads clear in front of the Inn. Students living in Maple may park their cars in the space behind the cottage; students at Tamarack on the lawn under the trees by the main road. All others should use the parking space near the Barn.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT EVENING PROGRAM

Mr. Cook will speak briefly at the first meeting of the School Wednesday night, June 29, at 8:30 in the Little Theater. An informal reception will follow at the Recreation Hall in The Barn.

BREAD LOAF AND THE HUMANITIES.

R. L. Cook 1949.

I want to extend warm greetings to every member of this audience who will be at Bread Loaf this summer. It is most important that you regard tis as your school, and to realize that those who serve its aims and needs are eager to make each session a notable one in education.

Our aim, which has been briefly outlined in the bulletin, is, I suspect, not different from that of many other schools. We would like to have Bread Loaf as little as possible associated with capsule education which gives the-coveted equivalent of an advanced education upon the completion of, let us say fifty books, although it is usually closer to a hundred in the announcements. And we would like to discourage early those educational nomads who travel light and only for credits from many various institutions. We do not disparage those who are in earnest about the graduate degree, but the degree ought to represent exactly what it proposes—a mastery of arts. We would like to make advanced education in the arts of literature an intellectual experience, just as exciting and enjoyable as our first discovery of books. However, Bread Loaf does not operate by magic pedagogic formula. We simply believe that effective teachers and capable students are better than any profession of theory. Where there is a meeting of intelligent minds, I think the result should be healthy and hopeful. Henry Adams, who used his classes as an anvil on which to hammer his ideas, had, I think, the right idea. This is what should be happening up here. We should use our classrooms as anvils to hammer out^{our} ideas. We should make the School a place where constructive thinking is done.

One of the innovations at this thirtieth session is the appearance of the Helen Hartness Flanders Ballad Collection at Bread Loaf. Mrs. Flanders, who most generously has made this possible, has a rich, unique collection of over 7,000 items. Not all of this material will be found in our Library, but there will be a very rich sampling. Miss Marguerite Olney, who collected the majority of these items, will be here throughout the session to help interpret the significance of it to us.

Sam Houston once deprecated American writers who spent their time on "European castles and their crazy knights and lady loves." Instead, he thought they should "glean the unwritten legends of heroism and adventure which the old men would tell them who are now smoking their pipes around the rooftrees of Kentucky and Tennessee." Well, this is the way many other Americans have felt, but up here in New England Mrs. Flanders and Miss Olney have really done something about it. Here are ballads of British and American origin, campaign songs, fiddle tunes, original Shaker songs, and a mine of general folklore, including jingles, medicine lore, tall tales, epitaphs and finger rhymes. Readings have been made from the lips of the old ballad singers of this country—from Asa Davis of St. Albans, Vermont, Granny Fish of East Jaffrey, New Hampshire, Janathan Moses of Orford, New Hampshire, Elmer George of North Montpelier, Vermont. Bread Loafers will agree that we are lucky to have this material readily available. We are fortunate in having both Miss Olney and Mr. Davidson to help us appreciate the contribution of balladry to a native literature.

"Into the closed mouth no fly will buzz," says a Chinese proverb. Sleeping or awake it is a good proverb, but I shall take a chance with the flies this evening. I'd like to speak briefly on Bread Loaf and the humanities. What concerns me primarily are aspects of this problem as they are related to a school of literature. Most obviously students in an epoch of atomic energy and supersonic speed will turn to the physical or social scientist for knowledge necessary to equip them for satisfactory positions. They want security; they also want positions of prestige. Every alert student knows he is indoctrinated by necessity. Consequently, he is interested in those courses and in those fields which will help him to meet the problem of personal security. Many students, learning very rapidly what they can most directly apply, know that the physical sciences and politics, economics and sociology can answer their immediate purposes. Students who follow this procedure describe their attitude as "being realistic." These students readily agree that literature can help them to learn about human experience, but they are less enthusiastic about the direct application of literature in the workaday world. It seems to them that literature is only something appealing like a series of grace notes in the modern technological symphony. Shakespeare and Donne, Milton and Hardy, Melville and Hemingway—good stuff for one's spare time!

I assume the responsibility of a school like Bread Loaf is to keep viable the tradition of the humanities and to function as its interpreter. But to function to some purpose

we must know what most nourishes students in this tradition, whether it is, let us say, a structural knowledge of the Petrarchian sonnet, or the ~~teaching~~ ^{being} of moral values in The Magic Mountain. We must know the students in front of us; they must be our major interest. They are in fact the ones for whom the humanities exist. We would all be lucky if we had teachers or were teachers like Edmund Spenser's headmaster at Pembroke College, Cambridge, who believed "it is not a mind, not a body, that we ~~have~~ to educate, but a man; and we cannot divide him." This generous sense of wholeness, applicable to knowledge as well as to a human being, represents the humanistic viewpoint to me.

In our graduate schools I should think the common denominator of our collective aim was still to educate responsible leaders in society disciplined by the generous belief of humanism. Thinkers describe the concept of "Man Thinking"; Ortega y Gasset proposed "noble man". Whitman recommended "the saving remnant", Unamuno "the man of flesh and bone", and Toynbee "the elite". What one calls the end-product is of little consequence, but what one tries to ~~produce~~ is.

The belief that graduate schools if literature are losing their grip on their responsibilities may be negated by the excellent performance of instructors in literature departments. It may be thought that an assertion to the contrary is only a strawman, like Hawthorne's Feathertop, - "a wretched simulacrum." You may, indeed say, 'I see at once the poor reality of the argument beneath an ingenuous artifice.' Yet

lately I received a letter from a graduate student at large, and highly regarded Eastern University. This young man, An able student and former veteran, is being considered for an instructorship next year in this institution. In his letter to me he mentioned what was heppening in two closely related study groups: the English Literature field and the field of American Civilization. Distinguishing briefly between the kind of subjects discussed at their respective meetings, he wrote that the English group was meeting to discuss "Frauds in First Editions"; the American Civilization group was meeting to discuss "Political Leadership". Moreover, the American studies group had invited as a speaker a former presidential candidate, who had accepted. The young graduate student thought the divergence in attitude between the two groups was symptomatic. It probably is. Conceivably, the English group might produce one or more Sherlock Holmes antiquarians, with a gentle, innocuous interest in the cultivation of the venerable. There is saying that the eagle does not catch flies. Well, I thought the teacher in the field of literature was like Melville's Catskill eagle that dived deep and soared high, but in this instance the eagle is only occupied with fly-catching.

Some of our post World War II students have different ideas about what should be taking place in institutions of learning. I realize the sense in Sir Richard Livingstone's declaration: "To know one's age, and nothing else is useless. We must be able to criticize and judge it... Otherwise we risk

being captives of our own day and slaves to its attendant delusions..." Students also realize this, and they would be interested in learning what there is to be learned about leadership By observing closely the careers of Themistocles and Caesar. They do not reject the reading of Thucydides or plutarch, Machiavelli or Tacitus. What is so discouraging to them is, I think, the failure to find cr teria in their literary studies by which they can with justice and discrimination criticize and judge this or any age. They see too often that their instructors are like the monks Lewis Mumford mentioned in The Condition of Man, who copied the old herbals in the scriptoriums of the monasteries, and in copying made their plants less and less true to life and hence more formalized, "without," as Mumford says, "once recognizing their ability to reclaim the original truths by comparing the drawing with the actual specimens growing in their gardens."

The students I know, so like the students everywhere else, are offended by irrational tasks that make them copiers of old herbals, and not reclaimers of original truth, who grow by looking at actual specimens growing in the garden of the twentieth century. Everything said and done is always a dry bone in Ezekiel's Valley until the breath of life inspirits it. "Far-sighted as falcons, they looked down another future." True! True! Little wonder students should consider educators all too frequently as resembling pillars of salt.

The challenge to the school of literature is, as I see it, a twofold one. It is, first of all, intellectual. That is,

literature narrowly taught, circumscribed in its horizon of ideas and remote from the central issues of our time, is being by-passed as the students turn to more intellectually satisfying and remunerative fields--the physical sciences and social sciences.

The challenge is, secondly, a moral one. It involves the temper and ethical attitude toward the issues of our day. Let me explain briefly what I mean. Most educators would agree that the returned veteran had revitalized the classroom. He has certainly made himself felt in mine in a very salutary way. On occasion the classrooms have been almost supercharged by the veteran's vigilant curiosity and acumen. He has questions he wants answered, or, at least, discussed. Moreover, it is by talking after hours with some of these veterans that I have become more aware of the tragic plight of the world. More aware because the lessons these men have learned and the experiences they have shared show what a challenge the humanities face in making the moral issues stand up under the critical eye of a man who has been an active agent in the battle areas.

I don't want to inject sensationalism into this talk, but I do want to underscore my point, that our concern in literature must be with moral values as well as with intellectual ones. Who is to be the "great person", the "elite", "Man Thinking", or the "saving remnant"? Is he to be solely a giant intellect? Or is he to be someone in whom moral sense counterpoises intellectual acuity? The moral climate of war was

suggested to me by a vignette, written as part of a course assignment. A returned veteran writes: "It was a cold January morning when we entered the outer harbor of Le Havre. The sunrise was an unreal red and the water a clear and fantastic green. The sunrise would soon be gone-the water would soon be black. And, as if to capture the moment, these American G.I's were putting razor blades into chunks of bread and throwing them to the waiting seagulls. Little outbursts of laughter sounded as surprise would come and a throat be cut. This was Le Havre-red sky, green water, and razor blades." This soldier's captured moment, crisp, vivid, bitter, illustrates gratuitous cruelty, beyond the call of duty, clearly. And it highlights a moral problem that goes to the heart of our time. Part of our trouble is the moral confusion that comes from innocent insensitivity. How is the teacher of literature to meet the moral issue with which every alert student faces him when he talks about values in Macbeth or Ash-Wednesday or A Farewell to Arms? Does he talk only about aesthetic or social or intellectual values? Or will he face the moral values as they are implied in the subject matter? And what answers are we as teachers of literature to make to those who are aware of man's responsibility for his own plight since supernatural forces cannot be held accountable for the tragic confusion of our time? For example, how shall we define tragedy? Only according to the classical concepts of Aristotle and A.C. Bradley, but with no sense of the relevance

of tragedy in the plight of Theodore Dreiser's Clyde Griffiths, John Steinbeck's Joad family, and Arthur Miller's Willy Loman.

Recently Churchill described our century as "terrible"; it is and the word is more apposite than Auden's phrase, the "age of anxiety". If confirmation of Churchill's word is necessary one should read the first chapter of Dr. Howard Mumford Jones' Education and World Tragedy in which he enumerates the statistics of war and killing in our time. Literally, it is a chapter of terror, and illuminates the "terrible Twentieth century." Plainly nothing but rhetoric results from characterizing one's epoch. An analysis of our hopes as we confront our despair is more to the point. It may be as T.S. Eliot suggests that the Western World is a place where "the barbaric nomads of the future will encamp with their mechanized caravans." I don't agree. Or, rather, the Western World need not become the bivouac for the barbaric nomads in their mechanized caravans.

We are continually being exposed by the news commentators to the range of possibilities rather than the range of probabilities. The probability is that human nature will behave in a very contradictory way. It wouldn't be human nature if it didn't. It is also probably that we take ourselves with an unbecoming seriousness. What seems momentous now may be only a tick in time. But neither of these observations is especially consoling in view of the hard facts of contemporary life: racial hatreds, disease, the corruption of cities and politics, the legalized murder of war, human perversions,

the inhuman aspects of a mechanized civilization, and the inability of nations to find a common basis for amity.

Our knowledge is like a soldier's grasp of the segmental action of his particular outfit in a battle that spreads over a wide terrain and lasts for many days. The only thing we know is what we can see and feel. We never know the over-all picture. How can we see? We use only our imaginations. If the imagination is active it is likely that we realize something additional to our sight and feeling but never as much as we would like or need.

I am a little troubled when George Santayana, who lives in the convent of the English blue nuns on the grounds of the Church of Santo Stefano Rotondo at Rome, says, "Perhaps the universe is nothing but an equilibrium of idiocies." Santayana is an old man and philosophic and immune. The idiocies do not touch him. And they only touch me, so to speak. What does trouble me is my own "desert places," so much nearer home than universal equilibration. Whatever meaning there is in the universe is not vouchsafed to some lucky fellow by annunciation of a Superior Power. It will consist, as it usually has, in the personal meaning that a man puts there by dint of his intelligence, moral will and energy.

One of the first tasks of student and teacher is, therefore, to see what we need to recover is not belief but in what the meaning of our belief really consists. And how shall we focus our belief, and give it meaning except as we break through appearance and illusion to a clarification of reality??

This is one way to confront the hard facts of experience: by a disciplined response. I have always remembered how Robert Frost once described the arts as "scars" that frighten us to a disciplined response. Any great poem or story does just this to us. Encounters in literature brace us for the sudden, swift and startling onsets of experience. This is one way literature can vigorously serve the humanities. This is one way we can serve the interests of those who are being instructed by us today. It has always seemed to me that the primary function of education was to show how to explore reality in a vigilant, self-disciplined way. Consequently, literature has a great opportunity to show many lessons: men as they might be; men as they are. Above all, it can consider Chekov's dictum: "Man will only become better when you make him see what he is like."

There is much to be said for the humanistic Greek who was neither immersed in nature, nor uplifted to the supernatural, but in harmony with himself. To try to be in harmony with oneself is a large order at any time but education must be up to it. It would mean that education would try to make the individual see, as Frost shrewdly says, that "Every man must learn to contain his chaos." When we've acquired the self-discipline that enables us to contain our chaos, we've come a long way as poets or business men or students or soldiers or teachers. The chaos of the outside world can hardly compare with inner turmoil and tensions, and if by teaching with careful conscience we can help our students to acquire this

self-discipline, we will have helped to diminish the incidence of chaos in a world that is hardly more disorderly than we make it. If, at the last go down, we find ourselves castaways in Conrad's "destructive element," we will have to tread water for our lives. "The way is to the destructive element submit yourself, and with the exertions of your hands and feet in the water make the deep, deep sea keep you up," says Stein in Lord Jim. But what if the "destructive element" is not outside but inside, where it usually is? What then? I should think that reason which has been so hardly won and at times so little respected had better be respected. We had best keep our covenant with reason. By all means, what we think and say should be winnowed in the strong winds of rational discussion.

Secondly, we can make out task the intelligent reading of books. In the search for order, which characterizes our times, the writings that are ribbed and sinewed and fleshed with experiences are our great boons. They are perennially available, and in the cultural world of which they are such an integral part, there is no economic exclusiveness, although there is an intellectual one. The book belongs to whoever can make it his own. "He shall have the book," said King Alfred's mother, "who can read it."

In the search for order, our task is to read the great writings with sympathy and understanding, so that we will become aware, among other things, of a perspective in time. "A good scholar," says Emerson, "will find Aristophanes and Hafiz

and Rabelais full of American history." Yet this is but one way to read-with an historical sense. Twain gets the breath of life in Huckleberry Finn, and he fills it as chochful of Americana as the Farmer's Almanac is full of rural ritual. Yet he does more than this and id the difference consists its greatness. Moby Dick is a magnificent treatise in the whale fishery. But it is more than this as we see by contemplating the dark, turbulent waters in Melville's vast symbolic "bowl of salt." Walden is more than standard equipment for hikers. It is a book of spiritual pioneering, in which the light that never was on sea or land vibrætes as it does not in the records of the pioneers on western frontiers. Katherine Mansfield once referred to reading books so that the reader discovered "the life in the life of them." Who can doubt that to do this in the classroom would again effectively serve the cause of the humanities'

I have a third suggestion to make. In search for the order there is yet another way in which Bread Loaf School of English can meet the challenge. We can make very clear that in addition to the acquisition of self-discipline which enables a man to contain his chaos, and in addition to finding how to read books for "the life in the life of them," the essence of the humanities consists in an enkindling awareness of the primacy and dignity of the human spirit. No world is narrow the arc of which includes human relations. People, not far off galaxies only, expand the imagination. The personal ice age comes when there is no equipoise between heart and head, no warmth,

or what the Spaniards call simpatico. All human relations are risks but they are risks education has to take. Education is sharpest where the blade is thinnest-at the knife-edge of risk. In consequence, if the teaching of literature is truly democratic it will concentrate on fostering the natural leadership and self-expressiveness in each student.

What a difference it makes to any human being, to feel that he is a responsible agent, that he belongs to a community of common belief, that he possesses, in Nietzsche's penetrating phrase, a "civic name." We have a brilliant opportunity to make this responsibility felt, if without propagandizing or enforcing a chauvinistic viewpoint, we encourage wider views and the integration of related fields of study. We are trying to cultivate human beings, are we not, human beings to share in the benefits of "the general scheme of knowledge," who are not simply like bees in the cell of a hive, or "learned ignoramuses," as Ortega calls the super-specialists, but "men of flesh and bone," as Unamuno describes them? And these "men of flesh and bone"-what are they like? What will be their relationship to their fellowmen? In The Tragic Sense of Life, Miguel Unamuno a man whose intellect had not eaten up his vitals, says: "So far as I am concerned, I will never willingly yield myself, nor entrust my confidence, to any popular leader who is not penetrated with the feeling that he who orders a people orders men, men of flesh and bone, men who are born, suffer, and, although they do not wish to die, die; men who are ends in themselves, not merely means; men who must be themselves and not others;

men, in fine who seek that which we call happiness. It is inhuman, for example, to sacrifice our generation of men to the generation which follows, without having any feeling for the destiny of those who are sacrificed, without having any regard not for their memory, not for their names, but for themselves." It is possible for us to make this kind of approach on our classrooms. If we can be successful in making this attitude felt, I think literature will serve the humanities well. For it is important not only that we make literature a means to personal self-discipline, or to tap it as a source of vicarious intellectual experience, but also that we find in it a way to solidarity of man with man, and to a linkage of literature with other fields of knowledge. As a school of literature, the advantage is ours, since literature basically is a record of experience, and all fields of knowledge contribute to and are contained in this record. We should be opening "windows", in Lowell's phrase, "on every side of the mind where thickness of wall does not prevent it."

I think we stand a good chance of meeting our challenge effectively—which is to make literature serve the needs of the humanities and the humanization of man—if we begin with the experience close to us and work outward. "Out of the ground comes poetry," says Dr. Hocking of Harvard; "out of poetry, philosophy; out of philosophy all that we are." Usually we reverse this procedure and work our way back to philosophical frames of reference, to literature, and finally, to the deep roots of experience. But it is not important to start with the

personal experience of the ground we stand on, and see how the literature we read comes from the range of man's experience on this earth; to see also how poetry crystallizes in philosophical points of view; and, later, to realize that our philosophy is all that we are, since it is what we think, what we believe, what we say, what we do?

I am convinced that literature best serves the humanities and that Bread Loaf best meets the challenge of these days when it fulfils its old and wonted tasks of making people understand first, the importance of reacting with a disciplined response; second, the importance of reading creatively; and third, the importance of learning to respect the primacy of the human spirit. These are most certainly moral as well as intellectual concerns. How, indeed, is democratic society to be regenerated unless that regeneration begins within at the roots of human experience? And education in literature by definition is or should be concerned with rearing a whole human being.

BREAD LOAF SCHOOL OF ENGLISH 1949 SESSION

Seniors

Men

Baker, Robert

Burgess, Charles

Clark, Keith

Myers, Franklin

Pacquette, Normand

Trexler, Charles

Women

Bolling, Millicent

Borst, Jane

Chenault, Margaret

Doring, Eunice

Frazier, Ethel

Kingsley, Elizabeth

Miller, E. Jane

Parkinson, Mildred

Pollard, Barbara

Seidenman, Joan

Vila de, Maria (Mrs.)

BREAD LOAF SCHOOL of ENGLISH
1949
General Statistics

ATTENDANCE ACCORDING TO STATES:

Alabama	1
California	3
Connecticut	23
Delaware	1
Distr. of Col.	3
Florida	2
Georgia	3
Illinois	9
Indiana	2
Iowa	2
Kansas	1
Kentucky	4
Louisiana	2
Maine	2
Maryland	5
Massachusetts	15
Michigan	5
Minnesota	2
Mississippi	1
Nebraska	2
New Hampshire	7
New Jersey	15
New York	37
North Carolina	1
Ohio	3
Pennsylvania	24
Rhode Island	2
South Carolina	1
Tennessee	4
Texas	2
Utah	2
Vermont	8
Virginia	2
Washington	1
West Virginia	1
Wisconsin	9
Canada	1
Colombia, S.A.	1
Puerto Rico	1

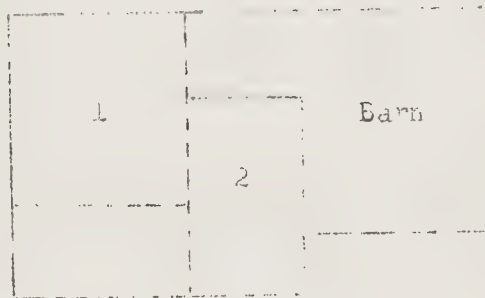
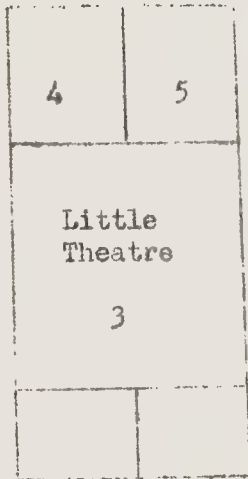
(35 States, plus D.C.)

Total Attendance	209
Men	79
Women	130
Old Students	94
New Students	115
Non-credit Students	12
Veterans	37
8 credits	14
7 "	12
6 "	123
5 "	19
4 "	24
3 "	1
2 "	4

ATTENDANCE BY COURSES:

	Credit	Non-credit
5. Lit. Comp.	10	0
7b. Stagecraft	31	4
9. Hist. of the Eng. Lang.	23	1
10. Vict. Poets	17	2
19. Chaucer	29	1
21. Mod. Eng. Novel	24	6
24. Dr. Johnson & the Enlight.	23	6
32. Milton	35	3
37. Continental Novel	33	9
39. Short Story	39	4
40. Am. Ballads	49	9
41. Am. Novel	30	7
58. Am. Letters	29	3
67. Five Phil. Poets	43	7
74. Transition from Vict.	24	5
86. Curr. & Methods	26	3
87. Teaching of Lit.	44	2
97. Lit. of the O.E.	45	10

1949



LIST OF CLASSES

86	Curriculum and Methods	Mr. Palmer	Barn 1
19	Chaucer	Mr. Anderson	Barn 2
24	Dr. Johnson and the Enlightenment	Mr. Baker	Little Theater 4
40	American Ballads	Mr. Davidson	Little Theater 3

10:30 A.M.

37	Teaching of Literature	Mr. Zalmer	Barn 1
39	The Modern Short Story	Mr. Beck	Little Theater 3
41	Six Major American Novels	Mr. Brown	Little Theater 4
97	Literature of the Old Testament	Mr. Reuchert	Barn 2

10:30 A.M.

9	History of the English Language	Mr. Anderson	Little Theater 4
10	Victorian Poets	Mr. Joyce	Little Theater 5
67	Five Philosophical Poems	Mr. Baker	Little Theater 3
58	Soc. & Int. Ideals in Am. Letters	Mr. Brown	Barn 2
37	Representative Continental Nov.	Mr. Jensen	Barn 1

11:30 A.M.

7b	Stagecraft	Mr. Volkert	Little Theater 3
5	Literary Composition	Mr. Beck	Little Theater 5
32	Milton	Mr. Joyce	Barn 1
74	Transition from Victorianism	Mr. Jensen	Little Theater 4
21	Modern English Novel	Mr. Thompson	Barn 2

BREAD LOAF SCHOOL OF ENGLISH

1949 Lecture Schedule

- June 29 (Wed.) Opening session - Mr. Cook - Bread Loaf and the Humanities
- July 1 (Fri.) David Daiches - Problems Confronting Contemporary Poetry
- July 6 (Wed.) Robert Frost - Readings
- July 12 (Tues.) Malcolm Cowley - The American Myth in American Literature
- July 20 (Wed.) Ballads Night at the Barn
Exhibition of books from the Hampshire Bookshop, Northampton, Mass.
- July 22 (Fri.) Three one-act plays
- July 25 (Mon.) Mark Van Doren
- Aug. 1 (Mon.) John Finley, Jr.
- Aug. 2 (Tues.) Exhibition of books from Harcourt Brace
- Aug. 3 (Wed.)
- Aug. 5 (Fri.) Plays
- Aug. 8 (Mon.) Seldon Rodman
- Aug. 13 (Sat.) Graduation exercises

Bread Loaf School of English

COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS

Carlos Baker

August 13, 1949

President Stratton, Professor Cook, members of the graduating class of 1949, members of the faculty, ladies and gentlemen: As the title of tonight's discourse I have chosen a participle, an adjective, and a noun which earned undying fame, when he first joined them in this order, for a seventeenth-century fisherman named Izaak Walton: the title I have in mind, and would transfer to your minds, is The Compleat Angler. Although the fish have been biting well this summer in the environs of Bread Loaf, and in our west-running brooks, my reference is not primarily piscatory -- except at what is now fashionably known as the mythological, or perhaps anagogical, level. For you will see that I have attached to the title a subtitle which in a measure defines its meaning, and signifies the direction in which I shall seek to apply it. The title is The Compleat Angler. The subtitle is The Whole Duty of a Teacher. And this, I take it, is a matter of great moment to us all, whether we are teachers, who know how much it costs, in time and money, to make a teacher; or the wives and husbands of teachers, who know by direct experience a great deal about the dedicated lives (dedicated to truth and to people) which all teachers must live.

Once upon a time a student was asked to define the meaning of Izaak Walton's title. After he had deplored Izaak's misspelling of the adjective compleat, he answered that The Compleat Angler meant a man who knew all the angles about fishing. It was a good answer, both in general, and for our special purposes. For the whole duty of a teacher is to know all the angles about teaching. He must cast his bait temptingly among the rapids of youth or on the too placid waters of Sophomore Creek and stir to action those who inhabit the shallows, or browse and drowse in the muddy deeps. He must likewise hurl his harpoon into the flank of mighty ideas, and hang on like the old Nantucketers, for dear life, whatever the weather, however mountainous the surrounding waves, whatever flukes of chance or accident burst up through the surface to destroy or divert his frail cranial coracle as it moves across the face of the deep. Or we might call it, remembering all the times we have been interrupted by the bell at the end of the class period just when we had a tremendous truth to reveal, we might call it, after Yeats, the "gong-tormented sea."

So much, for now, about the title and the subtitle. Next would come the text. Out of the sea of available texts I have fished up two which may serve. The first is a chance conversational observation from one of my revered colleagues. "The hardest job in the world," said he, "is to be a really good professor." For professor, in this statement, one could easily read teacher. And it comes to the same thing, for the professor is nothing but a teacher fishing a little farther downstream. But let us revise permanently, at least for tonight, the wording of the first text: the hardest job in the world is to be a really good teacher. The second text is from one of the wisest books, and the wisest teachers, in the whole background of western culture: Deuter-

onomy. "What is desired is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off... It is not in heaven, that thou shouldst say, Who shall go up for us to heaven and bring it unto us? ... Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldst say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us?.... But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart." This was the very burden of Ralph Waldo Emerson's Phi Beta Kappa address at Harvard college some years ago; and it was also, in another context, the essence of what he told the divinity students at the same institution about the same time: bring it forth. Or, in a modern revision of Izaak Walton's terminology, what's in your bait-can? Possession is five points of the teacher's law; the other five points are communication. What you have in your bait-can is your own. You dug it up. get it out, put it on your hook, get it into action.

While we are on it, there are certain questions, all to be taken metaphorically. How full is your creel? What kind of leader do you find most useful and valuable? What cast-system do you believe in, or are you a still-fisher? What is the weight of your line? How many strong strands are braided into it? Will it break under heavy strain? Do the hooks you use have really effective barbs, or are you one of the bent-pin boys, content to let the fish make off with your grasshoppers? The hardest job in the world, still metaphorically speaking, is to be a good fisherman.

The first requisite of your true fisherman, metaphorical or otherwise, is, as every one knows, the virtue of patience. Dr. Johnson, who had been a teacher, said of Milton, who had also been a teacher, that even so great a man as Milton could hardly be expected to perform classroom miracles. "The speed of the horseman," said Dr. Johnson, "Must be limited by the power of his horse," and though Dr. Johnson was not especially skilled as an equestrian, he had sat on enough horses to know. Every teacher, added Johnson, "can tell what slow advance he has been able to make, and how much patience it requires to recall vagrant inattention, to stimulate sluggish indifference, and to rectify absurd misapprehension." I think of a little illustrative story which may be tortured into pertinence here. A small boy who lives in our neighborhood one day came home, rather earlier than was his custom, from playing at the house of a friend named Joe. Well Joe, it appeared, had been hurt. How? He had climbed into his high chair in order to show Charlie how far back he could tip the chair without going over. In the middle of the demonstration, the inevitable had happened. Was Joe hurt? Yes, hurt bad. He hurt his head, and they had to take him to the hospital. What happened to his head? asked Mrs. Savage. "Came right off," said Charlie.....

Sometime, no doubt, we have all wished that certain heads were as easily detachable as Joe's. We have wished ourselves capable of performing the miracle of the transposed heads, as Thomas Mann once described it. We have wished to unscrew this intractably inscrutable object, and to replace it with, say, a thousand-watt bulb which would give off radiance. We have wished to change ignorance for wisdom, to substitute for the head of the adolescent Yahoo that of a mature and rational Houyhnhmn. Yet--and this is the fishing-rod and walking-staff of our comfort-- neither John Milton nor Samuel Johnson remained a schoolmaster quite long enough to learn what miracles the patient teacher can perform. We are in the business of capitation, not decapitation. We are prohibited by law from

the actual transposition of heads, even if we offered to screw a million-watt light bulb into the socket. But, over a period of time, we can do something at least as good: we can change the contents of those heads for the better, we can help to bring Yahooism ever closer to a goal beyond even Houyhnhnism. Slowly, under constant pressure, milligram by milligram, like wood far under ground becoming coal, we can achieve a transmutation of substance. Sometime, to pursue the underground figure through caverns measureless to man, the classroom may seem to our jaundiced eyes like Milton's Hell, a defiant pandemonium where the darkness is all too visible. Some of our days may seem to be made up, as someone said of Dante's Inferno, of one damned thing after another. But there are other days, or moments of them, when we can see the transmutation, or perhaps better the transubstantiation, taking place before our eyes. These are the rare times, the great times, which reward the patient teacher, the fisher for souls in Phlegethon.

If patience is the first, the second requisite of the good teacher is belief-- belief in the importance of what he is trying to do. For some years after he had earned the degree of doctor of philosophy, a friend of mine somewhat romantically wished that it had been a doctorate in medicine instead. He had a number of friends in that profession-- young doctors interning at a New York hospital-- and sometimes he accompanied them on their rounds through the wards. It seemed to him that they were closer to the fundamental facts of human existence than he would ever come; every day they grappled with dramatically crucial situations; he could see them standing up to death, and slowly, inch by inch, he could see death giving ground. He reflected for some years on how picayune-- by contrast-- his own efforts were. He could not see that the fundamental facts of grammar had much immediate relevance to human life. Every time he read Browning's Gramscarian's Funeral, he found it hard to be really sorry that the old geezer had kicked the bucket. What is dramatically crucial about a dangling participle in comparison with an arm broken and dangling by the victim's side? What is a split infinitive in comparison with a split skull? Instead of standing up to death, he was standing up to his departmental chairman, trying to persuade him that George Eliot is not the best diet for the average sophomore. One day he thought up a good intellectual argument for what he was doing. Reading some seventeenth-century volumes called Holy Living and Holy Dying, he reflected that one could easily spell the adjective as WHOLLY, and that he was also concerned in matters of life and death. For his job was to keep the minds of his students from wholly dying, or better, to show them ways in which they might wholly live. But this was only an intellectual conviction, and he remained vaguely dissatisfied with it until a few years later when he talked in his office to the father of one of his students. The father was a doctor and the son was going to be a doctor. The father was most insistent that the boy be thoroughly indoctrinated with the humanities. In his own college days, the doctor said, he had taken one lone English course; almost every other credit was in science, and all through medical school it had been science, too. But soon after he began practice he found that his patients were something more than concatenations of cooperative molecules; they were like-wise people. Rather less than half his task was bound up with pills and bills and sutures; the rest invoked those powers of sympathy and understanding which are bound up with a knowledge of human beings as human. As he matured in his profession, old people came to him in pain and desperation,

broadly hinting that they would like his help in quietly dying. With these and others he found that he must argue like Socrates and he began to use for therapeutic purposes a poem he had memorized long ago during his lone course in literature: a few lines from Browning's Epilogue to Asolando. That poem had bulked almost as large in his practice as the sulfa drugs, and had done more good than a barrel of barbiturates. The teacher's casting-iron may be longer and stronger than he thinks. A teacher needs belief, and patience.

The third requisite for the good teacher is an almost paradoxical union of pride and humility. He needs both pride of profession, and humility before the vastness of the realm of knowledge. A teacher is a professional man: he proudly professes to know; but he must also know what he does not know,-- and seek with humble perseverance to know as much of it as he can. The act of teaching is the sum of a good many separate professions: the teacher must unite the skills of the miner with those of the manufacturer; those of the builder with those of the wrecker; those of the banker with those of the minister. He must be a doctor, a lawyer, and even, on occasion, an Indian chief. The teacher is a miner; he is in the extractive industry; he must extract from the old books all that is pertinent and useful to life, and he must market his product from portal to portal. The teacher is a manufacturer: he must constantly manufacture canes and crutches, by which the weak can stand on the shaky ground of knowledge until they are strong enough to stand alone. But he must also humbly recognize that his crutches are never more than crutches, something to be used, and then thrown away as soon as their purpose has been served. The teacher is a builder, of facts, of systems, of ways and means; but he is also a wrecker, whose business it is to knock apart those shaky tenements in which it is no longer just or right that people should be allowed to live. The teacher is a banker-- of ideas, which he must be ready to invest, and also to lend out at a very high rate of interest; the teacher is a minister-- to minds diseased; he is a doctor, skilled in diagnostics and prognostics; he is a lawyer, knowing enough of precedent to win his case, or a judge, ready to throw a poorly built case out of court. And he is finally an Indian Chief. For the best retort to certain classroom statements is, very often, "How?", while we have all known other occasions in the classroom where the only possible rejoinder is "Ugh", followed by a swift blow with the tomahawk. The teacher may well take pride in his profession of professions. Yet he must also humbly reflect that there are more of the lame and the halt than his crutches will support, more wastelands than he can ever fertilize (for the teacher is also a farmer), more open spaces than he can cover with well-made structures, more decrepit tenements than he can ever demolish, more ills than he can diagnose or minister to, more trials than he can ever win. There are, in short, and to return to Izaak Walton, more fish than he can ever catch, and he may as well recognize it. Pride in profession, and humility in the face of the vastness of the problem he faces: these together are a third requisite for the good teacher.

To these three requisites for a good teacher, let me add, briefly, three operative principles of which the teacher in the humanities ought now and again to be reminded. These may be called, somewhat jocularly, the Cheese Principle, the Jawbone Principle, and the Lamp-post Principle. The Cheese Principle is related to the teaching requisite of patience: it takes a long time to make and cure a first-rate cheese; the ingredients must combine, interact, and mature for a considerable period before the product is ripe and ready. The teacher in the humanities is in much the same

situation. In the sciences, though there is much to know and assimilate, it is noteworthy that the young teacher-researcher frequently makes his most important contribution before he has reached the age of thirty. Yet the teacher-scholar in the humanities who makes a genuine contribution under the age of thirty-five or forty is fairly rare. "Art is long, life is short," says the German proverb. A certain patient application to the problem of assimilation and maturation, a willing acceptance of the necessary seasoning period is, in the humanities, the rule rather than the exception. Dr. Johnson, a ripe old cheese himself, once remarked that "the knowledge of external nature, and the sciences which that knowledge requires or includes, are not the great...business of the human mind." The great business-- or as Milton called it, the "great argument"-- with which the humanist must concern himself is religious, moral, philosophical, literary, and historical: the realm of principles, the realm of values. Such a business is hardly to be understood, such an argument is hardly to be resolved, in much less than half a lifetime. Yet these are the problems to which the humanist must address himself. He must be willing to accept the Cheese Principle.

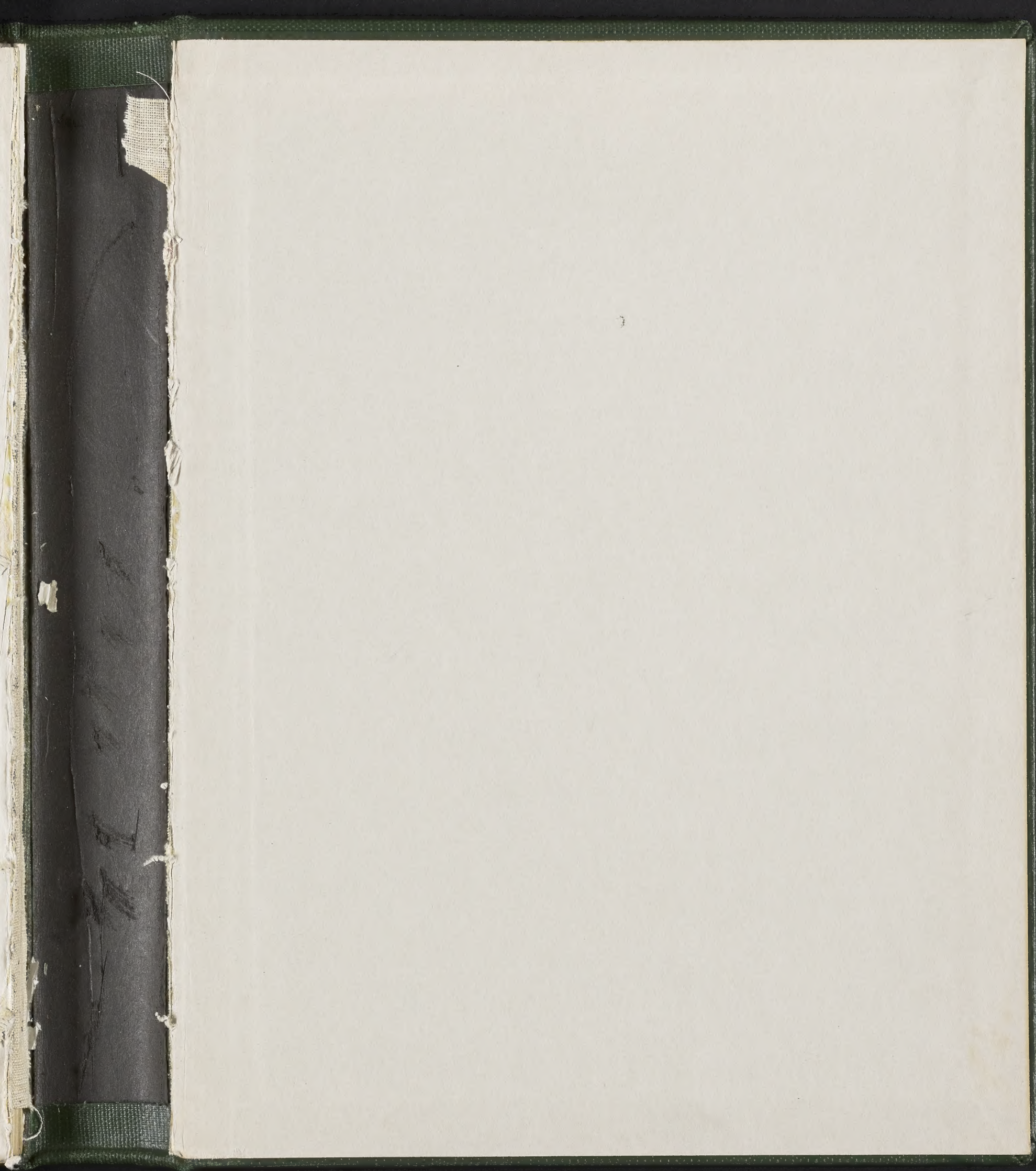
The Jawbone Principle is related to the teaching requisite of belief. The reference is not to the famous jawbone with which a prominent Hebrew warrior vanquished his enemies. I mean, rather, the jawbone which the archaeologist sometimes uncovers in deserts or under layers of rubbish in long-hidden caves. By careful measurement and calculation of such a jawbone, the biological archaeologist is able to reconstruct the original owner of the article as he probably looked, and the result is a life-sized model of *pithecanthropus erectus*. I said that the Jawbone Principle was related to belief. Before the archaeologist could proceed, it was necessary for him to believe that his fragment of bone was once part of a larger unified structure called a man. Any piece of literature is a jawbone fragment which bears extremely subtle relationships to the great unified structure of human knowledge, that grand totality of cumulative experience which is life-sized because it is nothing less than human life itself. The teacher in the humanities must work on the assumption of the unity of knowledge; he must also be sustained by a belief in the possibility of relating separate fragments to the larger unity. This is perhaps one answer to the problem of the relevance and practicability of the study of literature. No book, to modify Dean Donne's statement, is an island, complete in itself. Each is part of an infinitely extensive mainland. Wherever a teacher touches a book with his mind and his heart and his voice in such a way that it truly lives, he relates that book, as it was meant to be related, to all life everywhere and through all time. This is a teacher's triumph of association as a poem is for the poet. It is the essence of the Jawbone Principle, as applied to the study of literature, that teachers should establish such relationships.

The third, or Lamp-post Principle, like the teaching-requisite of mixed pride and humility, is essentially paradoxical. Its name is borrowed from the story of a drunk who emerged somewhat blindly from the front door of a bar and weaved uncertainly down the street until he met a lamp-post head-on. Pushing with his hands against the unyielding metal post, he began to circle it, going round and round, pushing. After five minutes he stopped, mopped his forehead, and exclaimed, "My God! I'm walled in!" Whether you think so or not, the incident symbolizes an important educational principle. For as teachers we are all concerned with knowing how to achieve the necessarily

precarious balance between establishing a central body of unyielding conviction-- the lamp-post-- and yet not using it to imprison our students. We must balance autocracy and anarchy, order and freedom, the establishment of limits and the constant extension of limits. We must wall our students in about as much as the drunk at the pump-post was walled in, which was not at all; yet we must somehow keep them concentrated on the lamp-post, must keep them moving around it until they know by experience that it is real; but we must put their backs up against it, keep them facing out, with a body of dependable doctrine behind them. That I would want to call the Lamp-post Principle.

We have been fishing around for a few of the requisites of the good teacher and a few of the principles which might well govern his teaching life. There are other rivers and streams which we might explore, but this is not a very long fishing expedition. The whole duty of a teacher can no more be summarized in half an hour than all the fish in our west-running brook can be caught in a day's casting.

To the members of the graduating class of Bread Loaf School of English, Middlebury College, I would say this in closing. The Compleat Angler can never be complete unless your skill and imagination make it so. No one can know all the angles, but it is your duty to try. Tonight you are presently to receive your fishing licenses. They are not good for a week, or a month, or a year: you will have to renew them every day of your teaching life, and it will cost you something each time. You are now masters in the art of angling; your bait-cans are full; the streams around the country are well-stocked with everything from minnows to muskelunges; there are plenty of whales in the ocean. You know the rules, both by precept and by practice: they are, in the words of Deuteronomy, in thy mouth and in thy heart. And as one final grasshopper for your bait-can, what about a modification of the garden-slogan which Mr. Frost suggested to us six weeks ago? As modified, it would read, "Do a little fishing, wherever you are." And good luck as they always say to departing fishermen, because you will need that, too.



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